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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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Workers' Clothing

1. Every worker is given a pair of canvas (brezent) coveralls by his factory once a year. The material is very thin and wears out in two or three months. Welders' coveralls are of white canvas and differ from those of other workers in their cut. Green canvas coveralls are usually issued to workers in Leningrad, and blue canvas coveralls also are seen there. Each worker is issued a pair of short, canvas gloves by his factory; these are replaced every two months. They are of very poor quality, as they are made of material from old army coats (white and khaki) and old navy coats (black). The gloves do not have long cuffs, and they usually wear out before they are replaced, so that the welders burn their hands. Workers are responsible for repairing and cleaning the articles issued them by the factory. Work clothes also may be purchased in State stores, at the following prices: work trousers - 50 rubles; work jackets - 65 rubles; and canvas gloves - 18 rubles.

General Information on Clothing

2. Factory officials wear civilian clothing if they are civilians and military uniforms if in the armed forces. Army officers at the Tosmare Shipyard wear blue trousers with their uniforms, and naval officers wear black trousers. The material is fifty percent wool. It is possible to tell a person's class by looking at his clothing. Party members are usually stout, wear ties, and are well dressed. It is difficult to differentiate between Latvians and Soviets by the clothing alone. Cotton cloth is fairly easy to get, but woolen material is available only a few times a year. Thread is hard to obtain, and such small articles as buttons are obtainable only on the black market. Students usually wear their own clothing, but some specialized schools supply a military-type, heavy-flannel outfit, in brown, dark blue, or dark green. The style is the same in all schools. Students who wear their own clothing often have plaid cotton shirts. Gym shoes are of black canvas with rubber or kazhmir soles. Kazhmir has the properties of linoleum.

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3. Employees of State institutions and ministries have to wear special uniforms. Firemen wear the same uniform that the militia does, since both are under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Clothing is not rationed, but winter coats are scarce and quality clothing is rarely available. Used clothing can be purchased in the komisijas veikali (commission stores). A complete outfit of cotton (probably man's) costs a minimum of 350 rubles and may cost as much as 700 rubles. A complete woolen outfit costs from 1000 to 5000 rubles. All tailors and seamstresses are in artels. Each kolkhoz usually has its own tailor or seamstress, as well as a shoemaker. All (other) shoemakers are now in artels. It takes from two to four days to get shoes soled. Rubber soles are common, as leather soles are rarely to be had. Wood soles are not used in Latvia; metal protectors are used on the heels and toes of shoes. A half-sole job costs 20 to 30 rubles. All types of shoes are sold in the local stores, but it is difficult to get sizes 41, 42, and 43. Leather shoes with rubber soles cost 46 and all-leather shoes 180 to 415 rubles. Most people wear the former. Blue and black shoe polish are available, but brown shoe polish is scarce. In Riga, disabled veterans work as shoeshine men.

Private Automobiles

4. Anyone who can afford an automobile may buy one. The Moskvich costs 9000 rubles and is sold by the Republikaniskas Automobilnu Trests at 16 Kirova Street, Riga. License plates must be applied for at the Communications Section of the Traffic Militia, in Lepaya, and the driver's license must accompany the application. Documents issued for a car must always be with the car; when the car is sold these documents are given to the new owner. About ten people in Lepaya have private, Moskvich cars, and two persons own Pobedas, which cost 16,000 rubles.

5. To obtain a driver's license, a person must attend drivers' school in the evening, except on Sunday, for three months. The course costs 700 rubles. Upon completion of the course, the applicant is tested on his knowledge of road signs, traffic regulations, and technical aspects of the engine by the Communications Section of the Traffic Militia. If he passes the exam, he receives the license for Group III, and subsequent examinations may be taken to receive a Group II or I license.

6. Gasoline may be purchased by anyone at State stores for 2400 (sic; should be 2.40) rubles a liter, or from truck drivers for 1.50 rubles a liter. Gasoline is not rationed, but it is scarce. Car batteries may be purchased at 16 Kirova Street in Riga; they cost about 75 rubles and are sold only to persons possessing a "car passport".

7. There is no restriction of travel in Latvia, at least not if one lives in Lepaya, except for the general law that a person register within twenty-four hours when visiting another city; this law is not obeyed anyway. It is possible to drive anywhere in the Baltic area or the USSR proper, but not to Poland or East Germany. Around Lepaya, one may not drive in the restricted defense areas; the militia, army, and MGB all may stop a car to check documents, depending on the locality.

Home Ownership

8. Only persons with families are allowed to own their own homes, and the house may not contain more than three rooms and a kitchen. In Lepaya, twenty to thirty families own their homes; any category of family may own a home. Privately owned houses are located near Lake Lepaya in Old Lepaya and on the north side of New Lepaya.

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9. A person wishing to build a house must own a plot of land, which usually is a former garden, since it is now impossible to purchase land. Then he must submit a proposed plan of the house to the local executive committee, where architects will examine the plan and advise the committee whether or not they should permit the house to be built. It is usually necessary to bribe these architects to get permission to build a house. A three-room house costs 10,000 to 12,000 rubles without plumbing or wiring. Wiring for electricity costs about 2,000 rubles.

Communists in Lepaya

10. The Latvians dislike all MGB officials and Party members, especially those of Russian nationality. Alfonss Noviks, former Minister of State Security, treated the population very severely. The following persons are Communists in Lepaya:

Cunculis, (fnu) - a Latvian who lived in Lepaya
Jazdinkus, (fnu) - Polish, Party member, worker in Tosmare Shipyard
Nameika, (fnu) - Lithuanian, Party member, worker in Tosmare Shipyard
Remess, Jekabs - Latvian, Party member, worker in Tosmare Shipyard
Simasko, Olgerts - Latvian, chief engineer at the autobaze, where he was responsible for 100 trucks, 70 buses, and 32 Pobeda taxis
Simasko, Roberts - Latvian
Stankevics, Voldemars - Latvian Party member, director of the Match Factory.

Anti-Semitism

11. The Soviets state publicly that they will get rid of all Jews in Latvia. There are only a few Jews in Lepaya, and, as far as is known, there are no restrictions on Jews by the authorities.

Tobacco Products

12. No tobacco is grown in Latvia. Makhorka is sold for pipe tobacco, but usually it is smoked only by soldiers. Cigarettes can be purchased one at a time in taverns; stores sell them by the pack. People smoke any brand that is available, but the Latvians usually smoke Vilnius and Moka. Parasut cigarettes are the cheapest, and Moka is the most popular, brand of cigarette. Cigarettes are sold in packs of ten and the brands are Vilnius, Parasut, and Moka. Papirossi are sold in packs of twenty, except Kazbek, which is also sold in packs of ten. The brands are Kazbek, Kurortnyye, Kanal Moskva-Volga, Riga, Raketa (80 kopeks, the cheapest and worst), Nord, Sever (2.40 rubles, preferred by Latvians), and Ligo, an expensive, luxury brand.

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